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THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR CAREER GROWTH

Saduakas Amirzhan Darmenuly

a-mir2002@mail.ru

First-year Student of L.N.Gumilyov Eurasian National University, Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan

Research supervisor – Zh.T. Kulakhmetova

Knowledge of a foreign language today is one of the conditions of professional competence. It is the basis for such professions as a translator, a foreign language teacher, a diplomat, a tour guide, an international journalist, or for all specialists whose teaching activities at university or college closely connected with the study of languages [1].

The processes of globalization and integration have led to the rapid growth of intercultural contacts in all spheres of our life. It firmly includes cross-cultural communications such as studying

at school and university on an exchange programs, internships of professors and scientists, international conferences, joint ventures, tourist trips, exhibitions, tours, international sports competitions, etc.

Thus, one of the conditions for successful adaptation in the social space is the knowledge of foreign languages. Knowledge of a foreign language is an indispensable component for intellectual growth of successful people. This requirement is now almost in all questionnaires of state human resources departments and commercial institutions as well. Those who, in addition to their native language, know at least one more foreign language, make a more favorable impression on company authorities [2].

Today, knowledge of a foreign language is one of the main criteria for employment and competitive advantage. Therefore, professionals in all spheres try to master several foreign languages. This allows them to significantly expand the range of their responsibilities and opportunities for the implementation of their professional knowledge.

The most popular foreign language is English. In general, today it is the most useful language in the field of business. However, depending on the location, the situation may change. For example, in the global economy, one of the most valuable traits which an employee can possess is the ability to speak one more or even several languages [3].

The ability to speak a foreign language will help the candidate to find a job and get priority over other monolingual applicants. Knowledge of a second language increases the likelihood of getting better position among a group of other applicants with the similar abilities. The British Chamber of Commerce conducted a special study in 2013 and found out that more than half of all companies are limited by language barriers in foreign trade, which does not allow them to expand their business and services market. Therefore, such companies encourage young professionals but are also extremely demanding of employees who know foreign languages [4]. (Figure 1.)

Knowledge of a second foreign language, such as Spanish, French, or Chinese, for example, clearly demonstrates to the employer the value that a potential employee can bring to the company in the future. It is also possible to get several bonuses if a person speaks "related languages", that is, from the same language group. For example: Chinese and Japanese or German, English, French. Given all the above, it is advisable to name specific reasons why knowledge of a foreign language really affects career opportunities [5].



Figure 1. Language bonuses

1. Competitiveness. When creating your resume, potential employee should demonstrate themselves as the most attractive candidate as much as possible. And citing proficiency in multiple foreign languages is a great way to do that. Any potential employer understands that bilingual employees are in high demand in the market and having these skills can help the company to expand its influence and increase profits, especially in the retail and manufacturing industries, where knowledge of Spanish or German, for example, is invaluable.

2. Visibility. Competition for jobs can be a very stressful process, so the ability to distinguish yourself from other applicants is of a great importance. A person who has studied several foreign languages will clearly differ from other similar specialists in their erudition, moral and cultural values, as well as more developed communication skills. It is these qualities that should be demonstrated to the employer at the first interview.

3. Relationship Building. The ability to speak several languages goes beyond simply verbal communication. This skill allows anyone to be more tolerant to different cultural groups and to understand them better. Talking to the other person in their native language helps to break down barriers and allows everyone to feel more comfortable and confident. When polyglots communicate with customers, suppliers, and colleagues, and demonstrate their knowledge of different languages, this fact can boost professional relationships. It can lead to increased sales, better service, and contribute to more interaction with colleagues.

4. Appeal to Global Companies. Many people seek a position in an international company. As companies expand their presence and influence across the continents and serve different kind of nations, global corporations are demanding candidates who will immerse themselves in cultures of these people. The ability to speak fluently in a foreign language will allow a person to prove himself/herself as a citizen of the world or a global employee who can easily adapt to any country with its customs and traditions and to work and adjust to any international company. If the candidate prefers a lifestyle that involves traveling and constant moving, then knowledge of several common languages and professional skills will allow him to find a job as a freelancer in any country in the world.

5. Improvement of Other Crucial Business Skills. Research shows that many of the skills related to foreign language skills are used favourably in the workplace [6]. For example:

- Students who speak a second foreign language are more creative and better at solving complex problems than those who do not. But it also depends on the similarity in the language group of the languages being studied.
- Switching between different languages can improve multitasking.
- According to the research made by the University of Chicago [7], people who speak several languages become more confident in their choice after they think about it in a second language and see if their initial conclusions remain correct.

The level of English proficiency is generally improving. The global population-weighted average remained stable, but 26 countries made significant gains in their estimates, while only seven declined significantly.

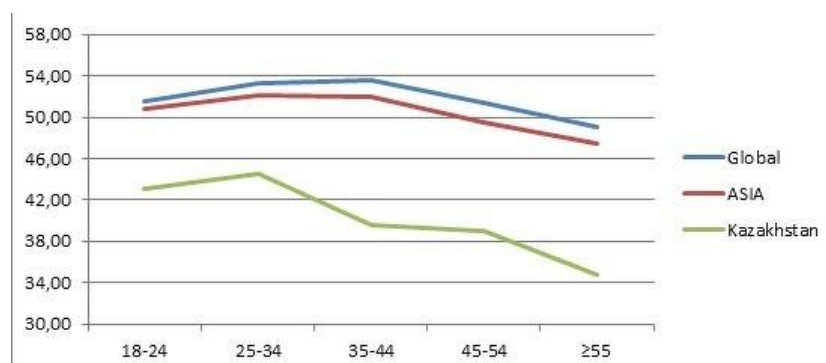


Figure 2. English language proficiency according to age

In Kazakhstan young people aged 26 to 30 are the best at speaking English while the young people aged 21 to 25 take the second place [8]. (Figure 2.)

Also, some social studies show that the level of English proficiency differs significantly according to gender. It also depends on the region of residence. (Figure 3.)

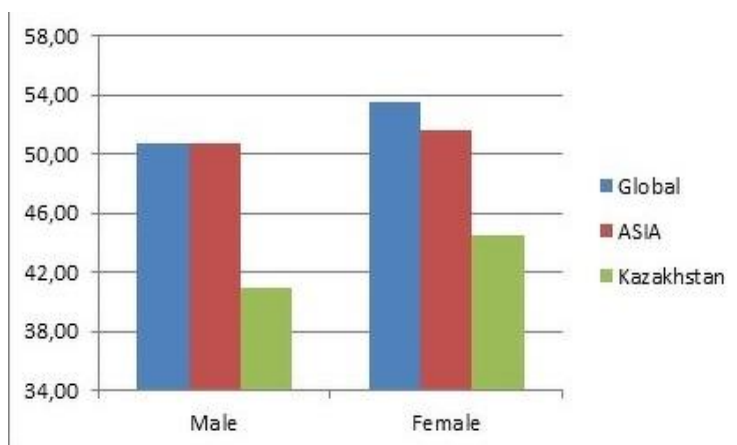


Figure 3. English language proficiency according to gender identity

Also, according to the results of an international study, only 20% of the population of Kazakhstan speaks a foreign language. For this reason, Kazakhstan ranked 92nd out of 100 in the world in terms of English language proficiency [9].

Therefore, qualified specialists who speak foreign languages are more competitive in the modern world.

In preparation of qualified professionals for various fields the component of language learning is English for Specific Purposes.

Since there are several fields of activity, education, science, etc., it came to represent the type of language that could suit each field, so it is English for Special Purposes (ESP), which refers to teaching or learning a language for a specific field, for example, law, medicine, or for business in general [10].

The linguists Mackay A. and Mountford R. define English for professional purposes as teaching a language for "perfectly practical purposes" [11]. Thus, it is the need for a particular specialist. They may be academic, professional, or scientific needs. The authors also determine this term as a special language that is used in specific conditions by certain participants in certain situation.

This is particularly emphasized in the field of history and historiography. Translation of historical terms in this respect is no exception and is associated with the presence of certain difficulties, the overcoming of which depends on the quality of the transferring the information into another language. First of all, it should be noted the apparent ease of translation of historical terms, many of which converge and even dissolve in the common vocabulary.

Historical terms, however, require compliance with certain translation rules, which are determined by the background knowledge and tradition adopted in the target language. Historical terms are understood as lexical units that denote categories and concepts of historical methodology and concepts of event history. The latter have captured the material and spiritual achievements of people's activities. They carry information about the life of society in a certain period of historical reality and serve as a means of historical knowledge. Historical terms of event history contribute to the reconstruction of the historical past of humanity [12].

As a proof to the statement above, I want to give a practical example. I have been working at the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan as a tour guide since September 2020. During

this time, I gained invaluable experience in conducting excursions in Russian and English, including through the halls with historical themes and exhibits. Thanks to a high level of English, I can correctly and as closely as possible convey the meaning of certain terms and names of geographical areas, as well as more freely answer questions from foreign visitors, delegations, ambassadors on various topics and historical artefacts. Now I am also preparing an excursion program in German, and I can say with confidence that the knowledge of several languages was the decisive factor in which I was hired for this job.

I also conducted a sociological survey among the other guides of National Museum. The staff of guides is 19 people, including me. Of these, 11 people are proficient in English. Also, some guides can conduct excursions in other foreign languages: German, Chinese, Korean, Italian, Turkish, and Spanish.

But what opportunities open up for specialists who know foreign languages? Guides who are proficient in a foreign language can conduct excursions for foreign ambassadors, delegations; participate in international conferences and exhibitions, which are also held with the support of the National Museum of the Republic of Kazakhstan. This experience significantly expands the qualification of a specialist, as well as increases the salary and its value in the labor market.

Summarizing all mentioned above statistic data, facts, and information, we can conclude and confidently confirm that knowledge of foreign languages is one of the most important criteria for career growth. This skill is especially important for working in international companies and in such spheres that requires public speaking.

Nowadays, the study of foreign languages is an important aspect of the life of a modern person. Learning a foreign language gives us the opportunity to get acquainted with the culture and traditions of other countries, contributes to the development of thinking, imagination and memory. Its knowledge is necessary for effective interaction of states with each other in many spheres of life (science, politics, culture, art, etc.). In this scientific article, we were able to show the importance of learning foreign languages for increasing competitiveness in the professional sphere, as well as to indicate specific practical opportunities and privileges in foreign language proficiency.

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